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General and complete disarmament: towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda

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## Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda

*The General Assembly,*

*Convinced* that the existence of nuclear weapons is a threat to the survival of humanity,

*Concerned* at the prospect of the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons, *believing* that the contention that nuclear weapons can be retained in perpetuity and never used is not supported by the history of human experience, and convinced that the only complete defence is the elimination of nuclear weapons and the assurance that they will never be produced again,

*Concerned also* at the continued retention of the nuclear-weapons option by those three States that are nuclear-weapons-capable and that have not acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,[1] and concerned at their failure to renounced that option,

*Concerned further* that negotiations on nuclear arms reductions are currently stalled,

*Bearing in mind* that the overwhelming majority of States entered into legally binding commitments not to receive, manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and recalling that these undertakings have been made in the

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 729, No. 10485.

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context of the corresponding legally binding commitments by the nuclear-weapon States to the pursuit of nuclear disarmament,

*Recalling* the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice in its 1996 advisory opinion that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control,

*Stressing* that the international community must not enter the new millennium with the prospect that the possession of nuclear weapons will be considered legitimate for the indefinite future, and convinced of the imperative to proceed with determination to prohibit and eradicate them for all time,

*Recognizing* that the total elimination of nuclear weapons will require measures to be taken firstly by those nuclear-weapon States that have the largest arsenals, and stressing that these States must be joined in a seamless process by those nuclear-weapon States with lesser arsenals in the near future,

*Welcoming* the achievements to date and the future promise of the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks process and the possibility it offers for development as a plurilateral mechanism including all the nuclear-weapon States, for the practical dismantling and destruction of nuclear armaments undertaken in pursuit of the elimination of nuclear weapons,

*Welcoming also* the Trilateral Initiative between the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the International Atomic Energy Agency to ensure the irreversible removal of fissile materials from weapons programmes,

*Believing* that there are a number of practical steps that the nuclear-weapon States can and should take immediately before the actual elimination of nuclear arsenals and the development of requisite verification regimes take place, and, in this connection, noting certain recent unilateral and other steps,

*Underlining* that the ABM Treaty remains a cornerstone of strategic stability,

*Stressing* that each article of the NPT is binding on the respective States parties at all times and in all circumstances,

*Stressing* the importance of pursuing negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament in the Ad Hoc Committee established under item 1 of its agenda entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator[2] and the mandate contained therein, on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and considering that such a treaty must further underpin the process towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons,

*Emphasizing* that, for the total elimination of nuclear weapons to be achieved, effective international cooperation to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons is vital and must be enhanced through, *inter alia*, the extension of international controls over all fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices,

*Emphasizing* the importance of existing nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties and of the early signature and ratification of the relevant protocols to these treaties,

[2] CD/1299.

*Noting* the Joint Ministerial Declaration of 9 June 1999[3] and its call for a new international agenda to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world, through the pursuit, in parallel, of a series of mutually reinforcing measures at the bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral levels,

*Acknowledging* the report of the Secretary-General of 21 September 1999[4] on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/77 Y of 4 December 1998,

*Taking note* of the observations of the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency contained in the report of the Secretary-General,[4]

1. *Calls upon* the nuclear-weapon States to make an unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the speedy and total elimination of their nuclear arsenals and to engage without delay in an accelerated process of negotiations, thus achieving nuclear disarmament, to which they are committed under article VI of the NPT;[1]

2. *Calls upon* the United States of America and the Russian Federation to bring the Treaty on Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START II)[5] into force without further delay and to commence negotiations on START III with a view to its early conclusion;

3. *Calls upon* the nuclear-weapon States to undertake the necessary steps towards the seamless integration of all five nuclear-weapon States into the process leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons;

4. *Calls* for the examination of ways and means to diminish the role of nuclear weapons in security policies so as to enhance strategic stability, facilitate the process of the elimination of these weapons and contribute to international confidence and security;

5. *Calls upon* the nuclear-weapon States, in this context, to take early steps:

- To reduce tactical nuclear weapons with a view to their elimination as an integral part of nuclear arms reductions;

- To examine the possibilities for and to proceed to the de-alerting and removal of nuclear warheads from delivery vehicles;

- To further examine nuclear weapons policies and postures;

- To demonstrate transparency on their nuclear arsenals and fissile material inventories; and,

- To place all fissile material for nuclear weapons declared to be in excess of military requirements under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards in the framework of the voluntary safeguards agreements in place;

6. *Calls upon* those three States that are nuclear-weapons-capable and that have not yet acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to reverse clearly and urgently the pursuit of all nuclear weapons development or deployment and to refrain from any action which could undermine regional and international peace and security and the efforts of the international community towards nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear weapons proliferation;

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[3] A/53/138, annex.

[4] A/54/372.

[5] *The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, vol. 18: 1993 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.IX.1), appendix II.

7. *Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to adhere unconditionally and without delay to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to take all the necessary measures which flow from adherence to this instrument as non-nuclear-weapon States;

8. *Also calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to conclude full-scope safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency and to conclude additional protocols to their safeguards agreements on the basis of the Model Protocol approved by the Board of Governments of the Agency on 15 May 1997;[6]

9. *Further calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify, unconditionally and without delay, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty[7] and, pending the entry into force of the Treaty, to observe a moratorium on nuclear tests;

10. *Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to adhere to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material[8] and to work towards its further strengthening;

11. *Urges* the development of the Trilateral Initiative between the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the International Atomic Energy Agency, and urges that similar arrangements be developed by the other nuclear-weapon States;

12. *Calls upon* the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee under item 1 of its agenda entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator[2] and the mandate contained therein, of a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, taking into consideration both nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament objectives, and to pursue and conclude these negotiations without delay, and, pending the entry into force of the treaty, urges all States to observe a moratorium on the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices;

13. *Also calls upon* the Conference on Disarmament to establish an appropriate subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament and, to that end, to pursue as a matter of priority its intensive consultations on appropriate methods and approaches with a view to reaching such a decision without delay;

14. *Considers* that an international conference on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, which would effectively complement efforts being undertaken in other settings, could facilitate the consolidation of a new agenda for a nuclear-weapon-free world;

15. *Notes*, in this context, that the Millennium Summit in 2000 will consider peace, security and disarmament;

16. *Stresses* the importance of the full implementation of the decisions and the resolution adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,[9] and, in this connection, underlines the significance of the forthcoming Review Conference of the States Parties to the NPT in April/May 2000;

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[6] See IAEA/GOV/2914, attachment 1.

[7] See resolution 50/245.

[8] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1456, No. 24631.

[9] *1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Final Document, Part I* (NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I)), annex.

17. *Affirms* that the development of verification arrangements will be necessary for the maintenance of a world free from nuclear weapons, and requests the International Atomic Energy Agency, together with any other relevant international organizations and bodies, to continue to explore the elements of such a system;

18. *Calls* for the conclusion of an internationally legally binding instrument to effectively assure non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons;

19. *Stresses* that the pursuit, extension and establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at, especially in regions of tension, such as the Middle East and South Asia, represent a significant contribution to the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world;

20. *Affirms* that a nuclear-weapon-free world will ultimately require the underpinnings of a universal and multilaterally negotiated legally binding instrument or a framework encompassing a mutually reinforcing set of instruments;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General, within existing resources, to compile a report on the implementation of the present resolution;

22. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fifth session an item entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", and to review the implementation of the present resolution.